

Amdt. dated December 2, 2004

Reply to Office action of September 21, 2004

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended). In a connecting terminal having a connecting structure with a device for contacting at least one conductor to be connected via the connecting terminal and with a conductor track connection for connecting the connecting terminal to a profiled protective conductor bar, the conductor bar having lateral flanges disposed in a common plane, the improvement which comprises:

the conductor track connection being integrally formed of metal in one piece with the connecting structure, and the conductor track connection including:

a base section, formed with contact projections configured to abut against the lateral flanges of the conductor bar, and a resilient latching section with a latching projection configured to cooperate with a section of the conductor bar in arresting the connecting terminal on the conductor bar; and

a locking section formed with a locking contact projection and configured to cooperate with said base

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section in locking the connecting terminal to a further
section of the conductor bar;

whereby the connecting terminal connects to the conductor bar
by locking one of the lateral flanges between said locking
contact projection and one of said contact projections of said
base section; and by latching another of the lateral flanges
between said latching projection and another of said contact
projections of said base section.

Claims 2, 3 (canceled).

Claim 4 (previously presented). The connecting terminal
according to claim 1, wherein said locking section is a
resilient structure.

Claim 5 (previously presented). The connecting terminal
according to claim 1, wherein at least one of said latching
section and said locking section is formed by resilient
fingers.

Claim 6 (previously presented). The connecting terminal
according to claim 1, wherein said latching section has a
latching projection for engaging behind a profiled region of
the protective conductor bar.

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Claim 7 (previously presented). The connecting terminal according to claim 1, wherein said locking section has a bearing projection for bearing against the protective conductor bar.

Claim 8 (previously presented). The connecting terminal according to claim 1, wherein said base section is formed with at least one contact projection for bearing against the protective conductor bar.

Claim 9 (original). The connecting terminal according to claim 1, wherein said connecting structure is formed from sheet metal.

Claim 10 (currently amended). The connecting terminal according to claim 1, wherein said ~~connecting structure~~ conductor track connection is a stamped flat sheet metal part.

Claim 11 (currently amended). The connecting terminal according to claim 1, wherein said ~~connecting structure~~ conductor track connection is substantially flat.

Claim 12 (original). The connecting terminal according to claim 1, wherein said conductor track connection is configured

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to engage behind a protective conductor bar having, in cross section, a pot shape with a U-shaped central region and two edge region flanges projecting from said central region.

Claim 13 (original). The connecting terminal according to claim 1, which further comprises at least one spring terminal element disposed on said connecting structure.

Claim 14 (original). The connecting terminal according to claim 1, wherein said device for contacting the conductor includes at least one screw terminal element disposed on said connecting structure.

Claim 15 (original). The connecting terminal according to claim 1, wherein said connecting terminal is a terminal strip.

Claim 16 (new). An electric connecting terminal, comprising:

a connecting structure; and

a conductor track connection for connecting the connecting terminal to a profiled protective conductor bar, the conductor bar having first and second edge flanges extending in a common plane;

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said conductor track connection having:

a base section comprising first and second base contact projections for respectively abutting against the first and second edge flanges;

a resilient locking section with a locking contact projection; and

a resilient latching section with a latching projection;

said locking section and said latching section being configured to encompass opposing ends of the first and second edge flanges; and

said base section, said locking section, and said latching section being integrally formed from sheet metal;

wherein the connecting terminal is connectable to the profiled protective conductor bar by:

first, locking the first edge flange between said locking contact projection and said first contact projection of said base section; and

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second, latching the second edge flange between said latching projection and said second contact projection of aid base section.

Claim 17 (new). The connecting terminal according to claim 16, wherein at least one of said latching section and said locking section is formed by resilient fingers.

Claim 18 (new). The connecting terminal according to claim 16, wherein said locking section has a bearing projection for bearing against the protective conductor bar.

Claim 19 (new). The connecting terminal according to claim 16, wherein said connecting structure is formed from sheet metal.

Claim 20 (new). The connecting terminal according to claim 16, wherein said ~~connecting structure~~ conductor track connection is a stamped flat sheet metal part.

Claim 21 (original). The connecting terminal according to claim 16, which further comprises at least one spring terminal element disposed on said connecting structure.

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Claim 22 (new). The connecting terminal according to claim 16, wherein said device for contacting the conductor includes at least one screw terminal element disposed on said connecting structure.